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HEAVEN AND HELL,

210

—OR,—

A VISION OF THE

JUDGMENT DAY,

FROM AN

ORTHODOX STANDPOINT,

BY

MRS. C. A. WOODWARD.

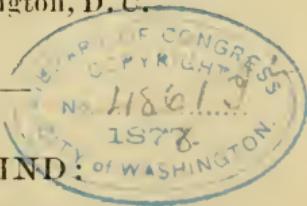
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED MOTHER.

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LAWRENCEBURGH, IND.

SAM. CHAPMAN, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER.

1878.



PS 3354
W 73

P R E F A C E.

This little poem, written years ago, not for publication, but simply as an out-burst of thought, upon the all-important subject of HEAVEN AND HELL, or Man's Final Destiny—written when it was almost considered Treason against the law of Almighty God to let the light of reason shine upon the sacred pages of the Bible—written when the horrible terrors of the law were sounded from nearly every saectuary in the land, when the lash of tyranny was held daily over the heads of the people by satin-robed priests and broad-clothed clergy, commanding a feigned respect and obedience to a God whose character and designs they dared not question or try to investigate, lest they be considered Heretics or Lunatics; and not wishing to be branded as either, save a few public and parlor readings, I have kept my production *incog.*

But now, since this great tidal wave of freedom of thought and speech has come sweeping over the world, washing out the old ruts of predjudice and superstition, I have been induced to launch my little bark upon its waters. And I do it with a consciousness that if there is anything contained in these simple rhymes that will throw the least light upon this still dark and mysterious subject, I have no right to longer "hide them under a bushel."

For, I believe, if we have one thing above another which we can call our own, it is our reasoning faculties. And, I also believe that it is a sin against our Maker not to exercise them to the fullest extent.

And, reared, as I was, by parents who believed in the final salvation of all men, and who read and explained the scriptures to me in that light; and yet, owing to the way we were situated at that time, nearly all I heard at school, and from the pulpit, taught me that God was going to eternally damn two-thirds or more of the whole human family; all this contradiction of the meaning of that great unfathomable revelation, said to be Divine, tended to confuse rather than enlighten my young mind. Then, in after years, when separated from my child-hood home, and I heard more of the terrors of God than I did of his mercy and love; all of which was so very repugnant to my sensitive nature that my whole being seemed to revolt against rather than reverence such a being, I felt sometimes that I was almost drifting away into Infidelity, especially after I had become a parent myself. It was then, with my mother heart all alive to the least of my children's sufferings, either physical or mental, that I began more earnestly to study the attributes of the author of our being. And while I have all deference for the opinions of others, I must differ with many of those with whom I associate, if I exercise the God-given powers within me.

In my opinion, God cannot be God and not be just. And it may be that all this diversity of opinion of his children rests upon that one little word, **JUSTICE**. What seems so horrible to me may be only justice to others. "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind."

And now, without further comment or explanation in regard to my own views of the subject under consideration, I will proceed to picture the future according to the strictly **ORTHODOX DOCTRINE**, (as I understand it,) and then leave you, dear reader, to your own reason and conclusions. I begin with the dawning of that new era, the **JUDGMENT DAY**!

All my life long I have heard so much said about the great Judgment Day, where the sheep were to be set upon the one hand, there to enjoy everlasting happiness, while the goats were to be driven away into "outer darkness," &c., &c., that my cogitations have very naturally tended that way somewhat, as I could but realize that I too, in common with the rest of humanity, was personally interested in this matter.

And, after a careful survey of the whole ground (from an Orthodox stand-point—taking into consideration the JUSTICE as well as the love and mercy of God,) my muse has summed it all up in this little poem, which I now respectfully offer to the public:

MRS. C. A. W.

HEAVEN AND HELL.

—O—

In this (the nineteenth century,)
Here, in this land of liberty—
With all the light that science brings,
To 'lumine nature, as she sings;
With perfect harmony of sound
From rocky caves, far under ground,
Up to the starry depths of Heav'n,
(Where *mercy* seems almost engrav'n,)
Alas! a cloud still hovers o'er
From whence the threatening thunders roar
Occasionally, to 'fright the world,
And keep the flag of freedom furled.

'Tis threatenings more than love that brings—
Oft-times, "A measure of good things;"
Hence, as a *merchandise*, 'tis found
Advisable (by heads profound,)
To deal in brimstone and in fire
Yet, sparingly, when son and sire
Sit miserly in cushioned pew,
With *small* bills paid and *large* ones due,
There's nothing like a *flame* to cut
The tightly knotted purse-strings: But

Oh! what a horrid scene some paint
Of Heaven and Hell, 'twould make one faint,
If, for one moment, forced to hear
The agonizing shrieks of fear
Imagination pictures, when
It naught but joy and peace should pen.

When God shall summon all the earth,
(The same great power that gave it birth,)
To 'pear before the judgment seat,
To humbly bow at Jesus' feet;
And as they come from every land,
Responding to the great command;
And friends and brothers parted long,
Join in one grand triumphant song,
And families unite again,
That have for years been rent in twain,
The burden of that song above
Will be, we know that "God is love."

Some come from honored graves below
Where soft winds sang a requiem low,
And mourning willows stooped and pressed
The dainty daisy's pearly breast;
And genial sunshine came each day
To kiss the tear-drops all away;
Some from beds of ice and snow—
Some from caverns dark and low—
Some from ruins where they slept,
While blackened walls their vigils kept;
Some from terrific fields of blood—
Some from beneath the raging flood,
And some, we ask the winds, from where
Did they a-rise? this joy to share.

But here they are, to praise his name;
It matters not from whence they came.
The gate's no longer just ajar,
For yet, while they were off afar
They saw it standing open, wide,
With sainted Peter just inside.
The useless Key his belt now holds,
While to his breast he gently folds
Each one in welcoming embrace,
Then points to his allotted place.

When all are in, the Heavenly harps
(A million notes of flats and sharps,)
With no discordant sound, then tell
How Angel hearts with rapture swell.

Then comes the march around the throne,
(That dazzling mass of precious stone,)
Where sits, in all his majesty,
The God of Heaven, and Earth and sea;
And by his side, our brother! He
Who shed his blood on Calvary;
The fatal Book upon upon his knee—
The Book that seals man's destiny.
The gorgeous pageant still moves on,
The Grand Review at last, is done;
The ranks are broken, and they're free
To bask in heav'nly purity.
With shouts and songs, and kisses sweet,
They clasp each other as they meet,
And with their myriad tongues proclaim
The honors of God's holy name.
All feeling that, "the last debt's paid,"
And peace with man and God now made.
They've crossed the "Jordan," gained the shore
Where parting is no more, no more.

O! yes, they're done with anguish now,
No trace of pain is on the brow;
No tears bedew the checks so fair,
No eyes upturned in earnest prayer,
No heads bowed down in silent grief,
No hearts there pleading for relief;
But all are calm, content, serene,
While drinking in this heavenly scene.

The little rivulets that glide
So merly down the green hill side,
Are singing now a sweeter lay,
To welcome in the "Jndgement Day,"
And larger streams, meand'ring through
The blooming vales are laughing too,
And each succe 'ssive wave goes by
In almost childlike ecstacy;
All rippling forth a song of praise
For this, the grandest of all days.
And e'en the glassy lakes so still,
All smiling, seem to feel the thrill
Of joy that beams on every face—
Reflected on their bright surface;
The mossy beds along the shore
Seem softer now than e'en before;
The grass has donned a richer green,
While every where is to be seen
The violet, with deeper hue,

All sparkling in the morning dew;
Now putting forth her tiny head,
And asking that she too may shed
Her fragrance, as a gift divine
To all assembling at the shrine.

And beautious birds, of every hue
Out riv'ling daisies, kissed with dew,
Are flitting now from tree to tree,
With joyous songs of liberty.
Yes, liberty! from toil and pain,
Sweet liberty! from sins dark stain.
One grand redemption upon high,
With not a cloud to mar their sky,
All heav'u her banners have unfurled
To welcome this poor sinful world.
Redeemed by Jesus Christ, the Lord,
Who died (according to God's word,)
That every sin might be forgiv'n,
And every sinner heir to heav'n.
Yes, not a drop of blood did pour
From Calvary, but 'twould restore
To purity, the foulest stain
E'er stamped upon the souls of men.

And now in answer to that blast
From Gabriel's trumpet they're at last
All gathered round the throne sublime,
From ev'ry land, from ev'ry clime.
On golden wings of beauty bright
They greet each other in their flight,
A holy kiss, and smiles so sweet
Exchanged between each group that meet,
As on they go through endless space,
With rapture beaming from each face.
Ne'er dreaming there is yet despair,
Beyond! where even earnest prayer,
Is all unheard, while demons mock,
The suffrings of the 'cursed flock.
Yes, torture! néver ending pain,
In store for them; and all in vain,
Will be their cries, their groans, their tears,
All, will not e'en reduce to years
The agony that now awaits
Some souls inside the golden gates?

(Alas! This respite only came,
To add another pang, or flame.
In contrasting this world of light
With that of hideous, hellish night.)

With room in plenty, and to spare,
With naught but pleasure every where,
Is there one heart so hard in heav'n
That 'twould not ask these souls forgiv'n?
O no! they'd cry with one accord,
"Forgive them; O, forgive them Lord!"
But hark! what sounds now greet the ear?
Why, all this eagerness to hear
These bugle notes? that float away,
Reminding them 'tis "Judgment day."
The mighty sound soon each have heard,
All heav'n's astir, 'tis God's own word,
Commanding them in thunder tones,
To now approach the chief of thrones,
Where sits their Judge, their God, their friend,
The God whose love they could command—
The God who spoke, and quick 'twas done,
When earth, and moon, and stars, and sun
Appeared, as symbols of his pow'r,
While every tree and every flow'r
Alike, look'd up with rev'rence true,
And paid the strictest homage due.
As winding notes are borne away,
Calling children from their play
And bidding older ones arise,
And come to order in the skies,
That look of wonder on each face,
Almost, the joys of heaven erase.
But yet with shouts they all obey,
And 'round the throne with great display,
They 'range themselves, in perfect glee,
As children at a father's knee.

Each one a blessing now expects,
For God his children ne'er rejects.
And all had learned, while yet on earth,
That he had loved them from their birth,
And is this not the same great sire
Who fosters not the faintest ire.
And who declar'd by his own word,
And through his son, (own blessed Lord)
That no respecter would they see
Of persons, well; then what can be,
To fear? All fear was lain aside,
As heav'n's gates were opened wide.

"The book, my son," the father cries,
As Jesus lifts his pleading eyes.

Up from the page he chanced to scan,
That sealed the doom of sinful man,
Then passed the book, that awful book!
Up to the Judge, with graver look.
Than when he raised his eyes and cried,
" 'Tis finished!" bowed his head and died.
The father sits in grandest state,
While winged cherups on him wait,
And thousands more are flut'ring near,
Without a care, or sigh or fear,
All baskin'g in that holy light.
With filmy robes of snowy white.

He points to one, he reads his name,
'Tis credited with deeds of fame;
His sins all blotted from the page
There's naught to mar his calm visage.
As nearer to the throne he drew,
Where sate his God and Jesus too,
And with a reverence sublime,
He meekly stands before the shrine.
But, oh! what rapture now he feels,
As at his maker's feet he kneels,
Receives the crowning gift of love,—
"Eternal life with him above.

He calls a second and a third,
And crowns them, as he speaks the word
Of life, and liberty and ease—
A life of love—or joy and peace.
He still proceeds, 'till scores are crowned,
And heav'n is dazzling all around
With starry gems and laurel wreaths,
So gently wafted by the breeze,
As through the court they're borne along
'Mid shouts of laughter and of song.

But, list! what means this sudden pause?
This grand suspension of all laws?
This breathless silence that now reigns
Throughout the wole of heav'ns domains?
Al is! alas! he's turned a leaf,
His loving face now tells of grief,
As o'er these pages stained with sin
He marks the names of some a-kin,
To those just risen from his feet,
Crowned with garlands, rich and sweet.
By magie pow'r, or pow'r divine,
All eyes are turned toward the shrine.

The utmost silence now pervades
The entire court; e'en hills and glades
Have hushed their warbling choirs to hear
The sentence he must now declare.

All heaven is mute, and in a-maze,
Upon his face have turned to gaze,
Where bitter anguish, dark despair
Seem pictured on that brow so fair.
And now, as that angelic band,
So horror-stricken, wondering stand,
And each one strain the eye to look
Upon the pages of the book,
He waves his hand to call them near,
Their awful doom they needs must hear.

Now nearer to the throne they fly
With blanch'd cheek and mournful eye.
Still all unconscious of their fate
How humbly at his feet they wait
And hearken for the slightest sound,
(With pinions drooping to the ground,)
That would reveal the direful cause
Of all this change in heaven's laws.

O, what a struggle! as he scans
The darkened page, recalls his plans;
His holy love and boundless pow'r
Are almost master of the hour;
He almost feels to cast aside
That deadly record, open wide,
His loving arms and mercy show
On each a crown of life bestow.

But as he reads again the name,
And ponders, "Can I be to blame?
For have I not (condition'ly)
Proffered life eternally?
And they have not fulfilled their part;
And thus he hardens now his heart.

That voice, that once was full of love,
And cheered the heart of all above,
That face, with mercy all aglow,
(While blessings he could yet bestow,)
But now, how changed!—what is it brings
This silent drooping of the wings?
'Tis justice! stern, and loud and cold,
Resounding through the heavenly fold;
And as he reads the names aloud

They step forth with their heads now bowed,
Perhaps expecting some rebuke,
As each the appointed place he took;
'Till all are called, and waiting stand
Before the Judge, the great, the grand!
The merciful, the mighty God!
His smiting of the chastening rod.

Again he speaks—his voice rings out,
But 'tis not answered with a shout;
'Twas such a wild, terrific yell,
Each culprit in a moment fell
Before the bar, in perfect fear,
While sister spirits hovering near
To plead for mercy, all in vain,
For those that now are worse than slain.

In trembling accents he begins
And reads aloud their numerous sins.
Again, a pause, as if to draw
New courage from his former law:
In this they see he now succeeds,
And with the sentence thus proceeds:

“Depart! ye cursed, into fire!
You've merited your maker's ire;
I find your sins are not forgiven,
And I cannot forgive in heav'n.
Depart! depart! go! get the hence!
No! not one word in your defence—
Your souls are stamped with sin's dark stain;
You chose on earth this gulf of pain;
You might escaped, the chance was given;
You might have all been heirs to heav'n,
But you refused; my “skirts are clear;”
I would that all were saved—but hear!
”Tis justice bids your loving sire
Consign to everlasting fire
Each one polluted thus with sin,
That heav'en may all be pure within.

“O father!” cries our Saviour, dear,
'Mid sighs, and sobs, and blinding tear,
As on his knees, before the throne,
He lifts his voice in pleading tone.
“O Father! cans't thou e'er forget
Mount Calvary? where every debt
Of gratitude and love 'twas due
Was paid in drops of crimson hue?

Can'st thou forget the thorny crown?
The cup of gall? the scoffs, and frowns?
That writhing, agonizing death?
The boon I asked, with latest breath?
And she who gave me being there,
Can'st thou forget her earnest prayer?
When at the cross, she meekly knelt
And all a mother's anguish felt,
While witnessing that tragic scene
That shook the very earth? and e'en
The sun; that orb so grand and bold
Could not the awful sight behold,
But veiled his face with sombrous cloud,
While earthquakes muttered vengeance loud;
The Temple's veil was rent in twain
When I! the son! O God! was slain.

And this was all for these, dear sire,
That they might now escape this fire
That thou had first designed to be
Their bed through all eternity.

"I know, my son," the Judge replies,
"That thou did'st make the sacrifice,
That thou did'st die on Calvary
To purchase life eternally;
I know that Mary followed there,
And at thy feet did kneel in prayer,
And lift her holy hands to me
In all a mother's agony;
As thou so nobly died to save
The world from sin's dark, loathsome grave.
But, when thou said the work was done—
"All finished," by thy blood, my Son,
Thon must have quite forgotten, child,
Amid those acclamations wild
Of dying thief and mocking Jew;
"Twas only part that thou could'st do;
For, true repentance through that blood
Is what I asked, and those who would
Accede to this, my firm decree,
Could dwell in He'ven with thee and me.
Hence, each was left a work to do,
In which some failed—and to be true
To JUSTICE, and my former plan,
I can but banish every man
That comes before the Bar to-day—
Unless his sins are washed away."

“O Father! see these bleeding hands
And pierced side, that ever stands
As suppliants for each sinful soul
Now under thine entire control.
These, are those for whom I cried
“Forgive them!” though they crucified
My body, yet I say forgive
And let us all as brethren live.”
But all this pleading is in vain,
For JUSTICE over all must reign;—
Then Jesus turned with pitying eye,
As if to say, “I can’t deserv
The meaning of this awful doom—
This ‘living death,’ this horrid gloom.
But mercy’s doors are closed! you see,
And pleading now but mockery.”

With ghastly looks, and great surprise
They, from the sacred throne arise
And turn their agonizing face
Up to their God, as if to trace
One gleam of hope, or mercy there
In that dark hour of despair;
But stern and rigid is that brow—
It has no mercy for them now;
It tells them they have been renounced,
The final doom has been pronounced,
And they must bid a last farewell
To friends and heav’nen, and turn to hell.

Oh! must they bid a last adieu
To brothers, sisters, mothers too.
All hope of joy forever quell,
And plunge into the fires of hell?
’Tis so, not e’en allowed to die;
There’s not a place for them to fly;
No refuge—no, not e’en a hill
’Twould dare to fall, and crush the will
Of that stern Judge, and author too,
Of all that’s good, and pure, and true.

And this is JUSTICE! would to God
That mortal man had never trod
Upon thy footstool, if this be
The greater portion’s destiny!
Great God! thy JUSTICE? thus to make
This damning gulf! this burning lake!
Before a human form was made
To grace the earth, and as you bade
“Replenish, multiply and fill,”

And thus obedient to thy will
Bring countless numbers into life
To struggle through earth's toils and strife,
And then, when that brief life is past
Into this loathesome pit be cast
As food for the devouring flame,
While curses on thy holy name
Is all that's heard, save piteous cries,
To thee, who reigneth in the skies.

But dare they question this, thy law,
And ask of thee, who all foresaw
From the beginning of thy reign,
This 'judgment day,'—this gulf of pain;
With all thy wisdom, all thy pow'r
The fate of each this trying hour.
No, sealed are all the lips to day;
No looks but that of dark dismay;
But yet, with hearts all torn and sore,
They lift their eyes to his once more,
With yet, faint hope, he will lament,
And let them of their sins repent.

But there's no mercy in that face,
There's nought now left, but to embrace
These loving friends still hovering near
With throbbing hearts and scalding tear;
Imprint upon their lips a kiss,
The last, 'twill e'er be giv'n in bliss.

A friend extends his trembling hand;
"Farewell!" he cries "tis God's command;
Farewell! farewell! I too must go
And suffer pain and endless woe."

"Oh! no, it surely cannot be,
Hell was not made for such as thee!
You? who fed the hungry poor
And clothed the naked by the score!
You? who watched with so much care
The sick and dying year by year!
You? who of your store did send
The 'bread of life' to foe and friend,
That they might learn of God and heav'n
And seek to have their sins forgiv'n!
You? who heard the orphan's cries,
And wiped the tears from widows eyes!
You? who ever sought to bring
Some cheering word, some offering
To bid the gloom of life depart,

And gladden some poor wounded heart!

This surely is enough, my friend
To give your life, your soul commend,
Enough, to win for you renown,
Enough, to gain a robe and crown."

"Yes, yes, all this I did, and more--
I turned no beggars from my door;
I hearkened to the orphan's moan,
And widows wants were to me known;
I helped to spread the gospel, too,
Which many souls to Jesus drew;
I did not covet other's lands,
I tried to keep all God's commands,
I loved my neighbor as myself—
Abstained from envy, malice, pelf,
And kept the holy Sabbath day,
But sometimes did neglect to pray.
And thus the ninety-ninth was done,
But yet, the last, the hundredth one
Was all forgotten, while below,
Which dooms my soul to endless woe.

It seems some little sin somewhere
Was not brought forth in fervent prayer;
My heart was so entwined around
The many suffering ones, I found
My mind so wrapped in earnest plan
To bring relief to every man,
That duty to myself, somehow
Was all forgotten, until now
This awful! solemn, "Judgment Day,"
I see the folly of my way.

And though the record shows me true
To Christ and God, and brethren, too,
The sacred page that bears my name
All clean and pure—except one stain—
One blot, that hangs a mourning pall,
Overshadowing and outweighing all.
Could I have lived another day,
And at the cross have knelt to pray,
And chanced to just remember there,
Before my God in earnest prayer,
This one foul blot, this tiny sin,
And asked to be made pure within,
I could now wear a crown, like you,
And have a home with Jesus, too.

But now farewell! a last farewell!
I'm doomed with devils now to dwell?
The deeds of charity I wrought,
This 'Judgement day' are counted naught
We only need the "book" to show
A true repentance while below.
It matters not, the way we lived,
How many hearts we may have grieved;
How many crimes, or dark the deeds,
All that the dying sinner needs,
Is to REPENT, and all is well,
His soul escapes the fires of hell!
Again, farewell! my cherished friend,
I'm going now, this is the end
Of all my hopes, and prospects fair,
My future is but dark despair."

"One taken and the other left,"
Perchance of every friend bereft.
Not one congenial soul above,
To send a rapturous thrill of love
Such as we feel to-day, my friends,
When soul with soul congenial blends.
When all *en-rapport* we become!
'Tis joy to each! 'tis heaven to some.

To me, when bosom heaves with mine,
As that electric power, divine
Sends tingling through my very veins,
The secret thoughts of other brains.
I ask no greater boon than this,
This hallowed! pure! this perfect bliss--
Not a mere bauble to behold!
'Tis something felt, but never told!

And there the lonely stranger stands,
With daz-ed look, uplifted hands,
As much alone that judgement day,
As if ten thousand miles away!
But look! his puffed lips now move!
'Tis half of anguish, half of love!
Come! let us draw more near and see,
What meaas this two-fold reverie.
Oh! steal away, let's not intrude
Upon that sacred solitude.
Did you those wisperings comprehend?
Or did I there, the lowest bend?
(This breach of etiquette, I pray
You'll pardon, friends, this judgement day!)

I caught his words, they held me bound,
His reasoning was so profound,
And this is what I heard him say
E're I could turn and come away,
"Oh! why, my God do I remain?
While this poor soul must suffer pain,
By far a better man thad I,
O, could he but be doomed to die!
Why am I robed in spotless white
And decked with garlands rich and bright?

Ah!—Now! I recollect all,
That death-bed scene, I just recall—
Where, just before I breathed my last,
With earthly scenes receeding fast;
The death-dews gathering on my brow,
And voice quite sunk to whispers now;
As loving friends drew still more near
To drop a silent, parting tear.
Me thought, perhaps, I'd best secure
A passport to that land so pure.

So, I REPENTED, then and there,
And asked God's clemency in prayer.
No sooner said than done. I smiled!
Which spoke. "The Father reconciled;"
Then closed my eyes, and felt so calm,
As Jesus poured the healing balm.

Ah! this is why I now can wear
This pearly robe, and crown so fair,
Although I'd wandered far away,
And scarce, if ever, thought to pray.
Alas! I'd lived a life of crime,
The darkest deeds of shame were mine;
My coffer's filled by stealth; yea, more,
My hands were stained with **HUMAN GORE**
Yet, when I came before the throne
With humble mein and fervent tone,
My God forgave it all so free,
And set my soul at liberty."

With this soliloquy he stands
With quivering lips and clench'd hands,
Still gazing after him, who cries
(As toward the yawning gulf he flies,)
"Adieu to all! farewell, farewell!"
Then plunges down in endless hell.

This doomed soul is only one
Of many thousands, all undone;
Now bade to take their leave and go
Where Demon's eyeballs, all aglow,
With feindish rapture, turn and stare
At each new victim of despair—
While lurid tongues of damning fire
There seethe and hiss, with hellish ire,
And Satan laughs and clanks his chains
And knows HE now the Monarch reigns.

For has not even God's great pow'r
Now succumbed in this trying hour?
He willed that all should with him dwell;
But Satan says, "You made a hell!
And put me here to rule and reign
As chief, o'er all this dark domain.
King over all, I could allure,
And by my wily schemes, secure
All that I could induce to sin;
(And here he gave a horrid grin,)
Yes, sin, and sin, and not repent—
On this you know I was intent,
That thus my kingdom should be filled
With subjects, all with vice instilled,

I had the liberty to roam
O'er all the earth, from home to home;
Assiduously I plied my art:
Ingeniously I played my part.
E'en babes who could but lisp thy name,
I 'lured to falsehood and to shame;
And when they knelt at mother's knee,
And would have there confessed to thee,
I then assumed an angel's smile,
(Their tender hearts to thus beguile,)
And whispered in their little ears,
'Tis folly: 'Rise and dry your tears—
Go join your comrades in their play,
And banish sorrow for the day.

A hurried "Amen" closed the prayer,
And left a secret buried there.
"The battle fough't, the victory won,"
Some daughter, or perchance a son,
Then don'ed a stain upon the brow,
Which blacker grew, from then, till now.
Another hearth of peace, debarred,
Another victim safely snared.

"I gathered up my cloven feet"
And hied me to another street;
Or firm, or hut or mansion grand;
It mattered not, for all the land
Was my own field to plant, to reap,
To garner and forever keep.

'Twas thus and so, each night and day,
I laid a stone and paved the way
To these infernal regions, where,
Regardless of your throne up there,
The soul is mine; Yes mine, ha, ha,
To torture, yet fulfill thy law.
And now if I the goal have won,
Outriv'led thee, and e'en thy Son.
Who spilled his blood upon the cross.
(Which devils counted naught but dross)
If I'd this pow'r, who gave it me?"
Said his Satanic majesty.

A mother clasps her darling boy,
That was on earth her pride, her joy;
Still close and closer to her breast
The trembling form is tightly pressed;
Her haggard face, disheveled hair
Adorned with gems and flowers rare;
Her mantle once so pure and white,
Sparkling with stars of holy light.
Now trailing in the dust behind,
All tell how frantic is that mind;
That heaven to her has lost all joy,
Since demons claim her darling boy.

Yes, e'en her magic harp so sweet.
'Twas tuned anew that boy to greet,
Hangs listless on her drooping wing,
She ne'er again expects to sing.

Oh! how that mother pleads to share
That misery, that dark despair.
But this request must be denied,
And he torn rudely from her side.
She sinks upon her knees and cries
(With clasped hands and streaming eyes,)
"O God! why watch'd I with such care,
His infancy? and e'en in prayer
Did ask of thee to spare my child,
When bleak disease, with threatenings wild,
Was plucking here and there a flow'r,
To deck, my God, thy heav'nly bower.

I see them now on every hand,
Sweet, unfledged nestlings! glorious band!
Were called before a sinful thought,
Or word or deed, was ever brought
To bear upon their infant brain,
To mar their peace, or cast a stain.

O Son! can you forgive that prayer?
That kept you in your cradle there,
And held you in your mother's arms,
'Till you out-lived your baby charms,
And thus matured, enough to know
That Satan had some power below?
O could I but recall that plea,
That kept you there on earth with me!
But no, too late! all ties are riv'n!
You're damned in hell, and I in heav'n!"

Another scene! An aged man
With hoary locks and visage wan,
A wreath of laurels on his brow,
His snowy mantle trailing now,
A golden harp—if tuned—could chant
The sweetest melodies extant;
All show that he is washed and clean;
Then, why does he so wretched seem?

Ah see! he clasps his daughter's hand,
Alas! it bears the sinners brand.
She, too, has come to say "farewell,"
E'er she is driven away to hell.
The old man reels, and paler grows,
And on her ghastly lips bestows
The last fond kiss 'twill e'er be giv'n
Inside the pales of holy heav'n:
While with a loving father's heart
He cries, "My God! why must we part?
What use will I have for this crown?
This robe, this harp, this great renown?
If she is not allowed to share,
O God a father's feelings spare!
Would thou this sentence countermand,
All heav'n would shout in chorus grand;
They'd praise thy name forever more,
And never cease their love to pour
Upon thy bosom! holy one,
The Father, Holy Ghost and Son.
But all in vain is this fond prayer—
Unchangeable the Judge sits there;

With feelings calm and sweet, serene,
While witnessing this tragic scene.
JUSTICE is all he cares for now;
All must before this seep'r bow,
Though all that's sacred's severed here,
Husband and wife, and sisters dear,
With fathers, brothers, every heart
Is forced from some loved one to part.

Look! see that babe with flaxen hair
Now floating gently through the air,
In heav'n's richest livery dressed,
With glittering stars and pearly crest;
Away it flies with smiles so sweet;
But see! it 'lights down at the feet
Of her who nursed it while on earth,
And loved it dearly from its birth.

Oh! how it folds its wings to rest
Upon that dear maternal breast,
And nestles close its curly head
Upon that bosom, 'twould have shed
Every drop of crimson gore,
To save the child on earth it bore.
And how she clasps the tiny thing,
And strokes its little golden wing;
Then plumes her own that she may fly
With this sweet cherub through the sky!
Thanking, from her fumost soul
The God (who once did all control,)
For this re-union, this new life,
Beyond the din of earthly strife.

Oh, look! a change comes o'er her brow;
What means these screams she's uttering now?
Why does she flutter here and there?
And wring her hands and tear her hair,
And shriek and moan, and sigh and cry,
And now sink down and pray to die?
Ah, see! they've snatched her babe away,
Because this is the "Judgment Day!"
And she is numbered with the lost,
While he is one of heav'n's host;

While just beyond, there stands a bride—
Her earthly helpmeet by her side,
Who scarce had dared to call her wife
Until the brittle thread of life
Was sundered; and he left to mourn
With mortal life, to him now shorn

Of all its beauty, grace and love,
'Till pitying eyes looked from above,
And called him too, to join the song
Of "sweet deliverance" with the throng.
And here he'd been allowed to taste
(With arms entwined about the waist,)
Of her he'd loved, the sweets of heav'n,
From every shade of sorrow riv'n.

Although that marriage vow, that twined
These loving hearts of kindred mind
Was all of earth, no longer bound
By ritual ties or solemn sound
Of priest or law, yet who will say,
That love, congenial, fades away,
That love that melts two hearts in one
Like crystal drops beneath the sun
Shall vanish, like the morning dew,
Or that grand arch of every hue
That proudly reached from pole to pole,
Inspiring each and every soul,
And bidding them with reverence bend
To him, who this grand bow did send,
To smile a moment or an hour,
In token of his love and power.

And thus, beyond that Jordan stream
By that instinct of love, 'twould seem,
He found her waiting on the strand
With smiling face—extended hand,
The first to greet the trembling soul,
And usher to the finale goal.
And here around the throne divine,
They'd knelt before the sacred shrine,
And join'd in that grand shout on high,
For this reunion in the sky.
And then, with outstretched pinions fair,
They rose upon the balmy air,
And soared away in perfect bliss,
Bestowing here and there a kiss,
Upon each floating group who waved,
A kindly welcome, as they layed;
In that delightful stream of love,
Of perfect peace and rest above.

Until that blast from Gabriel's horn,
Apprised them this was "Judgment morn."
And now the sentence has been past,
He must in endless flames be cast.

But she is pure, and can remain,
And drink of hea'vnly sweets again.

A crown of life is on her brow;
Why is she not rejoicing now?
O God! behold her youthful face,
Beseeching thee, but to efface
That stain from thy great record there,
That he too be allowed to share
The joy and pleasure of the blest,
And here his wearied soul find rest.
But no, in vain that pale, sad face
Upturns, while pearly tears fast chase
Each other down the marble cheek,
While lips and tongue refuse to speak.

In vain, she folds him in her wings,
And to the doom-ed form now clings;
'Tis but a long farewell, embrace
Her ashen lips, and blanched face
Move not the Judge in that sad hour,
To mingle mercy with his power,
But calmly, and with sweetest mein,
He looks upon the sickening scene,

And as that husband of a day
Kneels at his feet as if to pray,
But utters not the faintest sound,
His eyes are cast upon the ground.
He only smites his breast and bends,
Still low and lower as she rends
The very skies, with screams and moans,
That only mingle with the groans
Of others, thus bereft and tried,
Like this poor helpless, hopeless bride.

'Twould melt a human heart to tears,
A human sire would quell their fears,
At once remit all past offense,
And leave not e'en a dire suspense,
But crown with pardon, full and free,
To last through all eternity.

But now, remembering this is hea'vn,
Where faintest sins are not forgiv'n,
He rises with the last hope dead,
And fondly strokes that crown-ed head—
Imprints a kiss on lips and brow—
Unwinds the arms of her who now
Entreats to follow e'en to hell;
Yes, rather than to say "farewell."

That long, that last, that sad "good-bye"
She speaks it not, but heaves a sigh,
That wings it way up to the throne,
Where sits that seeming heart of stone,
And senseless to the ground she falls,
And hears no more the plaintive calls
Of him now borne toward the brink
Of that deep gulf, that endless sink—
Where "Help! O Help!" can ne'er be heard,
And *Hope* is but a senseless word.

All heav'n is one heart-rending scene—
There's not a soul but feels the keen,
Sharp pains of parting, in his breast;
Although he has by heav'n been blest.

The last farewell of love's been spoken—
The last fond tie of hope's been broken,
And marching orders loud proclaimed
For all whose souls with guilt are stained.
Oh, can the Father's ear withstand
That pitteous wail on every hand!
His court resounds with shrieks and groans,
Terrific yells, deep sighs and moans.
But for these glittering crowns and wreaths,
And stately robes borne by the breeze,
There's none could tell, the doomed and lost
From heav'n's redeemed and honored host;
This exhibition of distress
Annihilates all happiness.

All this! and yet that God of *right*—
That God of *mercy*, truth and might—
That God omniscient, pure and true,
That *Father* (with a love for you,
Should we with our affections gage,
'Twould seem almost like sacrilege.)
That God whose slightest wish must be
A *law* through all eternity.

That God! whose halo reaching far
Outrivaling sun and moon and star,
Illumines with its hallowed beams
The whole of heav'n—that heav'n which teems
With brilliant diadems of gold—
With banners, plumes and gems untold;
Which, catching up the sacred rays
(As earthly Necromancer plays)
Of one, they make a thousand more,
Which, like their prayers, they vainly pour

Out at his feet for those whom he
Has doomed to suffer endlessly.

And yet, that God! while all this train
Of mourners, at his feet remain;
But smiles, and reaches forth his hand,
(Like some magician's mystic wand,)
And plucks another star of light
From out his constellation bright,
And planting in their midst, he says
"Behold! my glorious mysteries!"
Then, from the overshadowing bow'rs
He breaks the richest, sweetest flow'rs;
Bedecks the spangled suppliants there,
And bids them 'rise, and cease their prayer,
Then wraps his fleecy mantle 'round
His stately form, with looks profound,
And settles back upon his throne
With "Not *your* will, but *mine* be done."

Some have torn themselves away
The dreadful summons to obey;
While others linger at the throne,
Beseeching there with look and moan;
And some still cling to loving friends,
'Till God an escort now he sends,
That bids them march without delay,
And thus they're rudely forced away.

They reach the brink—in terror gaze
Into that gulf, now all ablaze.
Another farewell kiss they wave,
And leap into a living grave.
O, should some kindly breeze now waft,
That last fond kiss, that piercing shaft,
Back to the bosom of the sire!
O, would he not then quench the fire
And let them all come forth again,
And bannish hell and endless pain?
No, "echo" answer, e'en that kiss,
Could not secure them heav'nly bliss.

No, not while JUSTICE stands to wave
Her taunting colors o'er that grave!
Though dripping now with tears and blood,
It proudly flaunts above that flood;
Triumphantly the bearer stands,
(Chief attribute of holy hands,)
With one foot on the fire-ry sea,

The other stretched far o'er the lea,
Commanding now with "iron" rod,
All Hell and Heaven; Yea! even GOD.

* * * * *

The escort have returned to he'ven
With tidings that the last tie's riv'n,
Their prisoners all secure in chains,
The chief of Demons o'er them reigns;
No danger that they'll e'er intrude
Into the presence of the good;
For moans and groans, and sighs and pains
Have no affect on devil's chains,
Unless, to rivet still more strong,
The manacles, while feindish song,
And ridicule, with taunting sneer,
Is hissed into the victims ear.

My God! what shrieks now rend the air,
What pleadings now with hopeless prayer,
As this report of endless pain,
Is sounded in their ears again.

"Why not rejoice?" the escort cry,
As sadder grows each tear dimmed eye,
"Ye are rid of all this sinful band,
The entire field's at you're command;
Rejoice! rejoice! let's hear again,
These magic harps send forth a strain
Of melody, as was their wont
Before ye sipped at sorrow's fount."

"Alas! our hearts must be of stone,
All earthly love and feeling gone,
Before we can e'en here in heaven,
Where all are clean and pure, forgi'vn,
Enjoy the rapture of the place,
Or e'en a smile light up our face.
The air, though laden with perfume
Of richest flow'rs in bud and bloom,
Seems but to scathe our throbbing brow,
As tauntings of their sufferings now;
And e'en the songters flitting through
The groves of gold and purple hue;
Their pearly beaks and plumage fair
Like diamonds glittering in the air,
Now almost split their tiny throats
In sending forth their myriad notes,
In vain endeavor thus to cheer
The breaking heart and dry the tear,
And help us to forget the past.

And feel that *we're* reached home at last,
That *we* should lay aside all care
And with them heav'n's glory share.

Ah sweet warbler, well hast thou
Thy bird-like form and feathery brow,
For had'st thou had a human form,
In the image of thy God been born,
Thy heart would not so happy be,
Although thou might from sin be free.
For this intelligence, 'tis giv'n
To man alone, (by God from heav'n,)
Of which we were so proud on earth,
And cultivated from our birth;
This human agency so free,
Of which we could boast over thee,
Seems but a curse in this fair world,
Into perdition it has hurled
The greater part of this great host,
And they are now forever lost.

What *now* is heaven? A dreary waste
To us who are allowed to taste
Its boundless sweets and pleasures rare,
While they are writhing in despair,
Pleading with their parched tongues
"How long, O God! How long, how long!
O! just one drop from yon clear lake,
This agonizing thirst to slake;
One cooling draught from that sweet fount
Now rippling down that pebbly mount,
Its rich effulgence sending forth
To some few souls its boundless worth,
While *millions*, Lord, might drink and live,
And to the author praises give,
Without diminishing the stream
Or robbing it of one bright gleam."

But all unheeded is this cry—
They're doomed a living death to die,
While on the little stream still flows,
Deep'ning and wide'ning as it goes,
All unconcious that it brings
Such pangs of sorrow as it sings
And dances by, with merry glee,
In view of all this misery.
While Devils heap the coals still high'r,
And hot and hotter grows the fire,
As Satan parts the crackling flames

And shouts aloud the victim's names
With a rebuke and taunting sneer,
Which shook the very gates with fear,
And then proclaimed his sovereign pow'r
To torture every day and hour,
With no regard for prayer or plea
Throughout this vast eternity.
"Yes, licensed by that God who gave
His son to die your souls to save,
And yet permitted *me* to reign
To thwart his plans: And thus in vain
Was that blood shed to cleanse the world
While I my banner held unturled."

* * * * *

All heav'n a change has undergone—
A cloud of gloom now rests upon
The fairest wreathed and sainted brow
Around that throne of JUSTICE now;
Deserted are those mansions grand,
Prepared by God's own gracious hand;
Those streets of gold, how lone and drear,
With here and there a traveler,
Who walk with head bowed low with grief,
Beyond all hope of kind relief.
How can they tune their harps to play
Since that eventful "Judgment Day?"
Their bleeding hearts will ne'er be healed,
Although the whole of heav'n's revealed.

That towering mount in beauty dressed,
The loftiest peak, sporting a crest
That almost touched the azure sky,
And kissed the clouds that flitted by;
That glassy lake, with swans so white,
Now floating on its surface bright;
Those water lillies that there grew,
And o'er them their rich fragrance threw,
All seem in vain to cheer the heart,
And bid the solemn gloom depart.
It only tears afresh the wound
As each new pleasure here is found.
The contrast, as it greater grows,
Speaks loud and louder of their woes;
And how can they participate
In pleasures, knowing of the fate
Of those dear friends, who once were here
Without a pain, or sigh or tear
Were numbered with the heav'nly throng,
And joined in every shout and song.

O God! how can they ever raise
Their voices now, in gladsome praise?
How can they sing and laugh and shout,
And honor thee who drove them out,
And turned that blissful place of rest
Where all with happiness was blest,
Into a house of mourning drear,
Where on each face is found a tear;—
Yes, down the furrowed cheek they creep,
As they in silence sit and weep—
Regarding not those beauteous hills,
Those fragrant flowers and purling rills,
Those crystal lakes and lawns of green,
And forests clothed in silver sheen,
All made expressly (by the Lord,)
For those obedient to his word,
And had by him all sins forgiv'n
Before they reached the gates of heav'n.

See them recline with saddened brows
Beneath the foliage of these boughs,
Where once the joyous shouts were heard
Commingling with the twittering bird,
As each the gentle breeze they fanned,
And upward rose, a glorious band,
To sing the honors of his name,
And love for Jesus loud proclaim;
By zephyr wings of beauty borne,
With naught in heav'n for them to mourn.
If years of pain could but atone
For what those souls on earth had done—
It years his wrath could but appease,
And he would then those friends release,
There would not be such cause for grief,
They'd feel that there was yet relief.
But Oh! how far from peace and rest;
What piercing shafts dart through each breast
As they reflect that endless time
Is all, that will suffice for crime
Committed in their brief career
Of life, upon that earthly sphere.

And thus a thousand years goes by,
And now they raise their eyes and cry,
“How long, O God, how long? must they
Yet suffer? for that thoughtless day,
That *little* sin, not pardoned Lord,
That violation of thy word.”

The answer comes, "Go count the sand
Upon the widest ocean's strand—
Then add to this the stars of light
That arched your earthly home at night,
And with the drops of ocean try
This vast amount to multiply.
And this, to you, may faintly give
Some idea of the years they'll live
To suffer in that gulf of fire
To gratify your Maker's ire."

Oh! wonder not that this should fall
With mighty weight upon them all—
Probe deep and deeper each sad heart
That had from some loved one to part;
And that low, solemn funeral knell
Is all that's heard to break the spell—
That dirge, or chime of sighs and moans,
Despondent prayers with tears and groans
Is all that greets the father's ear,
His kind and loving heart to cheer.

Another age—a *million* years
Is spent in anguish and in tears,
And yet again, we hear the *cry*
This time in pleadings but to die.

"Oh, welcome death! sweet death! sweet death!"
Comes swelling up with every breath
From that low, torturing bed of fire,
(Created by their loving sire.)
Who now with ears all closed to prayer,
Looks down upon each victim there,
And contemplates with earnest mood,
"This is my work, I called it good;
This pit is just what I designed,
And all the powers of hell combined
Cannot one jot or tittle waive
The law I at creation gave.
Unalterable this law must be
From first, throughout eternity;
For **JUSTRICE** must be dealt to all
Though e'en the very heav'ns fall,
Oh! suffering children cease your *cry*!
I cannot even let you die!"

"O Father, Father, Father, dear,
O will you not our pleadings hear!
How long, O God, how long must we

Yet live, thus banished far from thee?"
"Take all the ages of the past,
And all the souls on earth e'er cast,
Then add each shriek and pang of hell,
And every tear that ever fell
From mournful eyes, from first till now,
Combined with every sacred vow
Of man and God, and this will be
But one faint jot, *Eternity!*
"Tis far beyond the mind of man,
Nor can immortal souls e'er span
Or grasp that vast expanse of time
Allotted for your earthly crime,
Forever!" (says the great "I am,")
With finger resting in the palm
Of that same hand that strewed the earth
With beauty, fragrance, love and mirth,
And blessed the world with every grace
That would enhance the sweet birth-place.

Oh! can that holy hand of power
Yet punish for another hour?
Yes, still there issues moans of pain,
And dismal groans, with clanking chain;
And there, amid the flames we see
Two pleading hands of agony,
And hear again that piteous cry
For mercy, from the throne on high.

Some mother's son, or daughter fair
Cries from the depths of dark despair,
"O Heav'ly Father! was it thee
Who sent that message sweet to me?—
That *Golden Rule*, found in that book,
(Which as that holy word we took,)
Which said, "To others always do
As you would wish them do to you."
O God! was that for earth alone?
Or can thy heart be turned to stone?
Or is this now what I should do
If you were I, and I were you?"

Another volley, fierce and wild,
An answer gave, to that doomed child,
And as the fire'y flood swept by,
(With Satan's chariot mounted high,)
One pierc'ing shriek! the suppliant gave.
And all was hushed, beneath the wave;—
"Till others, thirsting for the cup

Are here and there seen struggling up,
All vainly seeking one cool draught,
Like those in *earth* life sweetly quaffed,
While one, with crisp-ed tongue, now tries
To move the God of Paradise.

Oh! hear his lamentation there;
Then estimate the power of prayer,
(When offered from the *earth* instead,)
Of this low, torturing, damning bed.
"The saddest words of tongue or pen,
He *knowe* are these,—*It might have been.*"

But there that instinct, hope, still dwells,
Which not a thousand deaths or hells
Can wholly banish from the man,
Or reconcile to heav'ns plan.

Thus prompted, here he lifts his eyes,
And to the God of mercy cries.
"How did I dare to muse an hour!
Or stop to trifle with a flow'r?
To bathe me in the sunset's glow,
Or feast on yonders grand rainbow?
Why listened I to rippling brooks,
Or pondered over dear old books?
Why did I heed a prattling child,
Or pause to sooth a maniac wild?
Until my sins had been forgiv'n,
And my poor soul made heir to heav'n?
Why were the waving fields of grain—
The valleys, mountains and the plain,
The shimmering clouds and pale moonbeams,
The rocks and moss, and silver streams,
So much a-kin to heav'n that they
Have led so many lambs astray?
Instead of studying nature there,
We should have spent the time in prayer,
And noting down our many wrongs,
In chanting Psalms and Gospel songs,
And begging thee on bended knee
To set our sin-cursed spirits free;
But thoughtless as a buzzing fly
We sate, admiring earth and sky,
'Till death, without a warning word,
Had summoned us before the Lord.

Oh Heav'ny Father! love divine!
Am I not yet a child of thine?
A "Prodigal" though now I be,
O may I not return to thee?

Oh! cannot all these years appease,
Or will this torture never cease?"

"No, never! never! never! child!
These piteous groans, and shriekings wild,
Though piercing through and through my breast,
And all the sinless sore oppressed;
But JUSTICE, child, must now prevail,
Though hea'y'n and earth, and hell bewail!
Forever! writhe and cry in vain,
But in that gulf you must remain;
The gate is closed, and bears my seal,
And from this court there's no appeal!"
* * * * *

My God! is this the end of man?
O, can this be thy holy plan?
Can this increase thy glorious fame?
Or in the least exalt thy name?
Or can it of advantage be
To punish through eternity?
If so, 'tis far beyond the reach
Of man to see or nature teach;
We can but fail to comprehend
How endless torture e'er can tend
To buoy thee up, thy bliss increase,
Or give thy loving spirit peace.

The whole of nature's laws are grand,
And guided by thy loving hand—
That hand so mighty, yet so kind,
That flocks and herds and insects mind.
Now temp'ring winds all chill and bleak
(As with some magic touch, or freak)
To the shorn lamb upon the hill,
And to the river and the rill,
'Tis gently waved and they obey,
And cease their grand majestic play.

Oh! God, can this same hand of thine,
This loving hand of power divine?
Hold bound in fire with clanking chains,
Thine own dear children? suffering pains
And anguish indescribable
Oh! hea'y'n, is not it terrible?
Is it not almost blaspheme
To utter this concerning thee?
Or can it e'er consistant be
With what we thus far know of thee?
Has't thou not watched us all with care,
While from thy bounty all doth share?

Dos't not thy warm sun shine on all?
Thy sparkling dew drop on each fall?
Thy pale majestic moon on high
Look down on all while sailing by,
And smile as sweetly on the hut,
As on the lordly mansion? But,
It is enongh—there's none who dare
To say, that *they* expect to share
This torture from thy hand,
Although they've broken thy command.
For them this hell was not designed,
To them thou could'st not be unkind,
Nor for their children, thou did'st give
They, too, in heav'n must *surely* live,
But all for others not so dear,
To their fond hearts, while journeying here.

This doctrine, once so popular,
This dreadful doctrine, near and far
Was taught in honor of thy name,
To thus exalt thy glorious fame.
Thou good, thou kind, thou loving God!
There's not a soul that's ever trod
Upon thy footstool e'er will know
The depths of mercy thou didst show.

According to our *works* we'll be
Adjudged each day, my Lord, by thee,
And sin will not unpunished go,
Nor yet our righteousness o'erthrew;
For when we violate thy laws,
LEGITIMATE EFFECTS OF CAUSE
WILL FOLLOW, though we come to thee
With contrite heart and bended knee,
Imploring pardon from thy hand,
For disobeying thy command.

We cannot tread upon a thorn,
Or wrong a child that e'er was born,
Without we feel the sting and pain
That follows quickly in its train.

All blessed in this world will be
The man who lives cons'tently,
And when that glorious change shall come,
And angels waft his spirit home,
They'll land him in a loftier sphere
Than if he had been groveling here.
As water seeks its level true,

So is nature through and through;
As Jesus has prepared a place
(All fitted with his love and grace,))
For every child of lowly birth,
And every sovereign too, of earth,
Lets thank him, for his boundless love,
And seek the higher realms above;
Lets try to elevate the soul,
Our evil passions to control,
Have charity for age and youth,
Be guided by the holy truth,
Which leads no child of earth astray,
But points beyond the "milky way,"
To where a father bends his ear
To catch the simplest evening prayer,
Not to *pardon* but to *love*,
And to woo to higher spheres above.

O God! would it not better be
To cast this stigma all from thee,
And hold thee up in thy true light,
With beams of love and mercy bright,
That penetrates each cloud of fear—
Quells every sigh, and dries the tear
Of every child that thou has't sent
(Without their knowledge or consent,))
To people this, thine earthly sphere,
To struggle through this brief career,
And suffer sorrow, pain and death,
On, on, until with the latest breath,
They hear thy call, are borne away
On snowy wings to endless day—
There to progress from sphere to sphere
Without a troubled thought or tear,
Enchanting realms of blissful rest!
For every sorrow-stricken breast.
All thanks to thee! thou God of love,
Who reigns supreme o'er all above,

But take this *dark*, this *awful* view
Of history, hell, and heaven too,
After this direful Judgment Day,
When 'tis but folly e'en to pray
For these doomed victims of despair
By any of his saints so fair;
And with this sorrow they must live
Through endless ages, just to *grieve*.

When every note of praise 'tis heard

From rippling brook or twittering bird,
Is but a barbed arrow spent,
(Although on mercy's mission sent,)
To tear afresh each wounded breast,
In that bright world, designed for rest.
When every tree, and every vine
That 'round the trunk and branches twine,
Reach out with pitteous, loving arms
And beckon with a thousand charms,
All seem but *mocking* since that day,
When God, his millions swept away.

And even roses, freshly blown,
Along the path so thickly strown,
Look up in vain with tender smile,
There thoughts from sorrow to beguile;
And lillies shed a tear of dew,
(As slowly pass the sinless few,)
And then presume with modest air
To offer their sweet fragrance there,
Then scatter leaves of purest white
Along the golden pave so bright;
While e'en the bursting buds now glance
With loving smiles to thus enhance
The pleasure of the saved, who now,
With weary step and saddened brow
Are left to tread the shining shore,
With heav'n's **JUSTICE** to deplore.

Can e'en our **GOD**, in view of this,
(**AUTHOR** of all that **MIGHT** be **bliss**,)
Can He, I ask, Oh! can He tell?
Which is **HEAV'N**! and which is **HELL**!

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